

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Kindly add the following after the section entitled "CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS" on line 9, page 1:

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is generally related to conference calls and more specifically, to methods and apparatus for conducting conference calls using a conference system adapted to operate between a circuit-switched network and a packet-switched network.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides methods and apparatus for conducting conference calls using a conference system adapted to operate between a circuit-switched network and a packet-switched network.

In one embodiment, a method for conducting conference calls using a conferencing system is disclosed. The method for conducting conference calls using a conferencing system is adapted to operate between a circuit-switched network and a packet-switched network. The method comprises the following: receiving on a VRU a plurality of requests for conferencing services from a plurality of callers, wherein at least some of the requests arrive via the circuit-switched network. A given conference call is assigned involving at least two of the callers to a given mixer coupled to communicate with the VRU via the packet-switched network. Respective voice streams originating from respective some of the plurality of callers are mixed. Once the voice streams are mixed, a mixed conference stream is routed from mixer to the VRU via the packet-switched network and the mixed conference stream is routed to callers in the given conference call from the VRU via the circuit-switched network.

In another embodiment, a conferencing system is disclosed. The conferencing system comprises at least the following: at least one voice response unit that is adapted to interact via a circuit-switched network with a plurality of callers. The voice response unit is further adapted to support at least one conferencing application and at least one non-conferencing application. There is at least one mixer in communication with the voice response

unit via a packet-switched network. The at least one mixer is adapted to support at least one conference call between at least two callers communicating with one another via the mixer and the VRU and at least one data store is adapted to store data representing at least one state parameter relating to at least one conference call supported by the mixer. The data store is coupled to communicate with the VRU and the mixer.

Kindly replace the section entitled "ABSTRACT" with the following:

The present invention is generally related to conference calls and more specifically, to methods and apparatus for conducting conference calls using a conference system adapted to operated between a circuit-switched network and a packet-switched network. In one embodiment, a method for conducting conference calls using a conferencing system is disclosed. In another embodiment, a conferencing system is disclosed. The methods can include at least receiving on a VRU a plurality of requests for conferencing services from a plurality of callers, at least some of the requests arriving via the circuit-switched network. A given conference call involving at least two of the callers is assigned to a given mixer coupled to communicate with the VRU via the packet-switched network. Respective voice streams originating from respective ones of the plurality of callers are mixed. A mixed conference stream is routed from the mixer to the VRU via the packet-switched network, and the mixed conference stream is routed to callers in the given conference call from the VRU via the circuit-switched network. The systems can include a voice response unit adapted to interact via the circuit-switched network with a plurality of callers, the voice response unit further adapted to support at least one conferencing application and at least one non-conferencing application. A mixer is coupled in communication with the voice response unit via the packet-switched network, with the mixer adapted to support at least one conference call between two or more callers communicating with one another via the mixer and the VRU. A data store is adapted to store data representing at least one state parameter relating to at least one conference call supported by the mixer, and the data store is coupled to communicate at least with the VRU and the mixer.